



December 2004 Brownfields Workshop

Statutory Authority

California Water Code,
Division 7, Section 13304

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Leaking Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Program

Water Board staff in concert with designated local regulatory agencies oversee investigation and cleanup of soil and groundwater contamination at sites with leaking underground storage tanks (USTs). Most of these UST cases involve fuel but a significant number involve solvents and other more challenging contaminants. The UST cleanup program dovetails with the state's program for UST licensing and operation.

Guidelines for site investigation and remediation are promulgated in State Water Resources Control Board Resolution No. 92-49 entitled *Policies and Procedures For Investigation and Cleanup and Abatement of Discharges Under Water Code Section 13304*.

There are approximately 43,000 leaking underground storage tank cases in California. As of December 1, 2004, about 28,000 of these cases have been remediated and closed, and there are about 15,000 open cases remaining.

A key feature of the UST cleanup program is the UST cleanup fund, created by the Barry Keene Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Fund Act of 1989 and administered by the State Water Resources Control Board. The fund reimburses petroleum UST owners and operators for qualified remedial costs. The State Board disburses roughly \$200 million per year for this purpose, mostly to small businesses and individuals. Much of the UST cleanup program's success can be attributed to the UST cleanup fund.

The Fund also provides money to the Water Boards and local regulatory agencies to abate emergency situations or to cleanup abandoned sites that pose a threat to human health, safety, and the environment, as a result of a petroleum UST release. Recent legislation has set aside a portion of the Fund's money to be used for cleanup of abandoned UST sites. These sites comprise a significant number of Brownfields sites throughout the State.